

Ep #39: The Lego War: Real World Coaching with Lyra



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Lisa Smith

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Welcome to *Real World Peaceful Parenting*, a podcast for parents that are tired of yelling, threatening, and punishing their kids. Join mom and master certified parent coach Lisa Smith as she gives you actionable step-by-step strategies that'll help you transform your household from chaos to cooperation. Let's dive in.

Lisa: Welcome, welcome, welcome to today's episode. Let me tell you. Today you are in for a real treat. Oh I'm so excited about today's episode. I do realize I say that every week, but every week I get super excited about the tools, the coaching, the support I'm bringing you. Today is no exception.

If you've been listening to me for a while now, you know that I do my very best to bring you tips, ideas, and support that help you create deep connection and cooperation with your kids. What I know is that while reading and listening is information, coaching is transformation. Coaching is where the magic really happens.

So this week I am taking things to a whole new level by bringing you a real world peaceful parenting coaching session. Oh, I just love doing these. So today join me in welcoming Lyra to the podcast. Lyra is a member of The Hive. She's a mother of three young little adorable boys. She's an executive. She has some incredible hobbies. Her and her husband are music lovers. I'm so excited to have her here today, and to have the opportunity to bring this coaching session to you. So join me in saying welcome Lyra.

Lyra: Hi, thank you Lisa. That was a wonderful introduction. I'm so, so honored to be here and to do this with you and share this with everyone.

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Lisa: Yes. I just adore you. I think you're amazing. It's such a joy to work with you. So let's jump in. Why don't you tell me what you want to coach on today?

Lyra: All right. So as you said, I have three wonderful little boys. Charles who is six years old, James who is three, and William Jeremiah who is 10 months. Charles, my six year old, is my strong willed boy. He was born strong willed. He knows his mind and knows who he is and has been that way since the beginning.

I was so glad to have you and find this peaceful parenting tool. Because before I started on this journey, I really didn't know what to do. We were not heading into a direction that I felt was fostering the connection and relationship that I wanted with him. So I just wanted to say thank you for that so much. It has been transformational. I can see him differently and I see myself as a parent differently since starting this journey with you.

So now, at this point, with Charles, we've had some great successes, but we really are going into a new very challenging period with him where he resists and argues. It seems with just about everything we ask him to do. When I try to connect with him, he will often fight or resist or be too busy. Then when I walk away or say okay and then he gets upset. So it's like a push me, pull you. It's challenging. Either way upsets him.

When he gets angry, he goes to the red zone or what I call horns down very quickly. So he'll yell. He hits. He's a very physical guy. So it's a very full body experience for him when he's upset about something. Though I've taken strides in becoming more regulated and being able to work through these things with him, I still have some big trigger areas where I fall into the power struggle trap with him. That's what I'm really hoping to get some coaching on today to help me not fall into those pits and help us, him and I, through these struggles and not get into a power struggle.

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Some of them are—When he hits his brother James, the three year old, or when I can't get space to get regulated, I'll try to pull back and take a break and he'll just come right after me. He'll hit the door. If I go into a room, it sounds like he's beating down the door to get through or scream. In the evening, I can't get a break. He won't go to bed. Or when there's a time urgency, like we've got to do something now. I get really dysregulated and triggered.

When that happens, I go to dominant parent side. I tend to do that. Like I'll punish or take away privileges or threaten to take away privileges, send him to his room. I'd like some tools around how to handle that better because it might stop the behavior. But I don't think he's really learning the values that I'm wanting to instill. He just focuses on the punishment and gets mad about it or will apologize so he can be done with the punishment and get out of it or whatever. Versus really understanding why or the values.

So I really would like some coaching and help around how to navigate the trigger point areas with him, how to work with him when I really need him to do something when there's not a lot of room to negotiate and looking at the whole picture with him. He has a hard time settling down. He's not sleeping very well right now. It's hard for us to get him in bed. It takes him hours to fall asleep no matter what we try to do, and he doesn't often get enough sleep. When he doesn't, it's really even harder. He's just so amped up all the time.

So I think those are the main areas is around the trigger points. How to stay out of the power struggle trap that I seem to be easily falling into with him, and how to manage it when he is storming, when he goes into the physical mode of it, the hitting and the yelling. It's hard to sit there and be with him. To be a witness because I feel like I'm trying to deflect him not hitting. I don't want to go to the dominant parent side and punish and send him to

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his room all the time, which seems to be what we go to when everything else fails. I don't think that's really getting the values across. But those are the main areas I'm hoping to work on today.

Lisa: Yeah, so let's talk about this. This is great. As everybody's listening, I want to remind you that the tools that I'm sharing are universal across all age ranges. So as you're listening in, your kids may be older, or you may have less kids or your kids may be younger. I want you to listen and learn how to bring these tools in your own home and apply them to create your own transformation in your family. Coaching gives you the opportunity to create the transformation.

So having said that, it's not lost on me. So let's talk about this again. So William is 10 months old, and James is three and Charles is six. You've had this new addition to the family. You have this baby in the household. You have this 11 month old that is, to no fault of his own, sucking a lot of the oxygen out of the house, right. 11 months old are needy and they can't do anything for themselves, and they need a lot of attention.

What it sounds like is that from a 50,000 foot level, Charles is learning or heading down a path of negative attention is better than no attention. The power struggle, the resistance, the defiance is really speaking the language of help. So tell me what you think about that?

Lyra: Yeah. When you were saying that I flash on some of the interactions with him. An example is when we're doing our school together. I homeschool him. That was an area that maybe prior to James or when James was really young was a real delight for us, and it was a really primary way for us to connect. It's gotten more challenging. Sometimes he is very cooperative and engaged, but often he will get really upset when we're trying to homeschool. He will not want to do it, or he'll resist and not

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be focused. I call it spazzing out. Like limbs flailing and rolling around in the seat and upside down.

So I'll say okay Charles. Let's just stop doing this right now. This isn't working. Then he gets really upset. He'll say something like, "I just want—I want you to." I'll say, "Well go to James first." Because James is there usually. He's like, "No, I want to be first. I want it just to be me and you. I want to do it together." So when you're saying that I'm like okay I can see that. But it's like I'm trying to give you that attention first. You're sabotaging it.

Lisa: So yeah. As I reflect back on what I know about you and your amazing life, you have a full time job. It has a lot of responsibility. I know that you take your job seriously. You show up every day to give your company your best. You have a fair amount of intense hobbies. You have a husband that you love and want to spend time with and extended family. Then you have these three little guys all six and under. I'm sure that your life is very busy and full and rich, and there are a bazillion tasks to get done in a given day. Am I right?

Lyra: That's very accurate, yeah. You covered that very well.

Lisa: So, you know, the interesting thing is when you're raising three boys, they're not trains. The job isn't to get all the trains running on time because they don't respond that way. You know this. I mean what is your six year old hardwired for?

Lyra: For fun.

Lisa: Fun, yeah. When I think about a mom who's homeschooling, taking care of a baby at 11 months old, working full time, I mean this is the profile of the average parent in 2021 no matter where you live in the world, no

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matter what your gender is. I mean we're busy humans, and we have a lot of to-dos. Sometimes our kids are the victims of the business because what they crave and need are things like personal attention, fun, a deep breath, a chance to storm. That is sort of the antithesis of what we can give them in the moment because we're so incredibly busy.

Lyra: Yes. That does resonate. I agree with that. Yes. I definitely agree with that. I will say one caveat is in my job, it's actually wonderful. I don't work full time in that job, though I probably work the equivalent of a full time job because of what I do. My company is really amazing, and I work a reduced schedule. So I work three to four days a week, but then I also have a business with my husband. So between the two, it's full time and a half probably.

Lisa: Yes, yes.

Lyra: But yeah, I get that. With Charles, I think the challenge that we have is even when we're with him, I often feel like... They're there. We're together all the time because we work from home. I work from home and homeschool. So we get a lot of body hours together, but I question sometimes how present and connected am I able to be with them? Because in those hours that I'm not working, it's like I'm trying to get a million things done.

I will stop and I'll pause. I'll be like, "Okay, this is our time together." But it's very hard with three little boys for that to be one on one time because usually it's them together. I know for Charles he often expresses to me; we call it special time. Special time is where they get one on one time. They crave special time. I think that's been something that's been a little harder for me to give him as of late, the one on one special time.

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Lisa: Yeah. And he probably craves it more than James because he had you for a while to himself. James is the middle child. There's always been one or two brothers, but the oldest, especially at six, he has some memories or at least some sense of I want her to myself. Let me speak to this as well.

So you mentioned that essentially you have two part time jobs working the business you run with your husband and then also working at your job. Then you homeschool, so that could be its own full time job. Then let's not overlook the impact. I keep coming back to it, but I don't want to overlook the impact of also caring full time for an 11 month old who can't do anything himself. 11 months is just that age where you can't blink for a second, right, or he's got his finger down the light socket or he's pulling on the dog's tail kind of thing.

So my guess is, and you tell me where I'm wrong here, is that Charles gets leaned on probably more than anybody because he's older. So as parents, we tend to lean on that level of independence. "Do it for yourself. Help me out. Go play by yourself." We lean on them a little bit because of their age.

Lyra: Yes. We've been framing it as...I mean it's great because he's just starting to be able to do those things for himself, really. Like come out dressed in the morning and put on his jammies himself, get himself a snack. It's kind of amazing for me because he's my first one and the other two are definitely not there. So I'm like oh my god. You can go do this yourself. Please go do it. So yes. Definitely asking him.

We start to give him more jobs. Like he has go put the dogs out or can you go open the gate for dad while he's leaving going to work. Can you grab the bag for the diapers? So I do ask him to help a lot with William, which he does enjoy. We give him responsibility for himself. Maybe sometimes too much responsibility. I think it's hard because he's very, very smart. I mean

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the little guy's IQ is off the charts. It's just amazing. I mean the insights and vocabulary he has.

I recall at his 15 month checkup, his pediatrician walked in and Charles, my son, said, "Hello Dr. Pruitt." And the pediatrician just about fell out of the door. Like he was like, "Uh, he just spoke a full sentence." We're like, "Yeah, yeah. He's been talking like that for a while." So he's very, very smart. So it's hard to remember sometimes that he's six because he seems to be aware and articulate and able to express himself. Then when he falls into these storms, it's kind of startling. We sometimes don't understand why we can't talk him out of it.

Lisa: Right. So that brings up a good point that intelligence and brain development are very different things. Just because he can string words together doesn't mean from a storming standpoint...Let's just say he has the vocabulary of an eight year old at six. That doesn't mean that he also has the emotional intelligence and the prefrontal cortex development as an eight year old. As parents, we all sometimes fall into the trap of making this assumption. Prefrontal cortex wise, he's still a six year old.

Lyra: Yeah.

Lisa: So the other thing that I want you to do that I think will solve a lot of the challenges, a lot of the resistance that you're feeling is I want you to continue to lean on him, but lean on him with fun and choices. You have to make things fun because that's what he's hardwired for. If you're leaning on him in a way that is a manager leaning on a subordinate, right.

So let's say I run a hamburger stand, and we're really busy and I'm barking out orders all day to my staff. Go clean the toilets. Empty the trash. Throw the fries in the basket kind of thing. Their reward at the end is payment.

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They get paid for their hours. They can see the reward, the long term gratification.

But a six year old is hardwired for fun. So when you're asking him to go get the diaper bag or you're asking him to open the gate for dad to drive out or you're asking him to get himself dressed in the morning, make it fun. Tap into his competitive spirit. Tap into his sense of excellence or wanting to improve. Make that sense of independence even and that higher responsibility. Make that fun and exciting for him rather than dull and demanding.

Because as you know the number one thing strong willed kids want. And you said in the beginning that Charles is your strong willed kid. The number one thing that they want is to feel in control. As the parent of a strong willed kid, if you're trying from a loving place to run your house like a locomotive conductor and you're trying to get all the trains to run on time, your strong willed kid is going to resist that.

Lyra: Yeah. I think I probably oscillate. So I try to consciously unplug that side of myself and have time to just connect with them. I call it we have a rhythm but not a routine. But then there are times where I do need to get a task done with him. Like cleaning up the playroom, for example. Which I realize is not inherently perhaps fun. Because definitely they don't see it as fun.

Charles does not see it as fun to clean up the playroom. But it gets to the point with three of them, here's a trigger point where I'm like there's three of you. After a few hours it looks like a hurricane hit the room. I start to get dysregulated about it and really triggered when I'm trying to do it all by myself. So I tried to enlist them to help more. So I'll say, "Charles, can you please help pick this up?" Sometimes he's great about it. So this a good example.

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But the other time it's a no. He will fight and resist. So I say, "Okay, well then if you don't want to clean it up, we're going to have to pack it away and put it away. We can't have it out if it's not something you can clean up. Like the Legos. We can't have Legos all over the floor. We can trip on them. It's hazardous. It's too much. So we'll just pack them up and put them away."

Then he goes into full horns down mode as I call it. Horns down mode is like, "No, you're not going to do that. I will stand and block you, and you're not taking away my Legos." Even if he didn't care about the Legos. Because I said there's a consequence and we're going to put it away then he gets really upset.

So I'm not really sure how to navigate that with him. If something is not fun maybe inherently to them and you're trying to make it fun, but they won't do it. Like how do I do that without resorting to that kind of punishment, which seems to really trigger him and me.

Lisa: I don't think you could have served up a better example for this call. So let's dig into this specific example. This is like gold right here. So you said, "We have a rhythm but no routine." So first of all, I would encourage you to start having a routine because that's useful. Much like adults, people like to know what is expected of them, right. Kids are no different. Rules help kids feel safe and loved.

So in your household, it might be every day we pause at 3:00 and we clean up the playroom. So that my habitual part of my brain, which is the first to develop, can kind of digest this. Because what's confusing to littles is some days, we clean up the playroom and some days we don't. Mom just randomly decides when we're going to clean it up.

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Now also take into account that three boys have made the mess in the playroom, and you're asking one of them to clean it up. It kind of isn't really fair. Now an 11 month old baby can't clean up and a three year old's not going to clean up super well. But for you, Lyra, just be mindful that you're asking one boy to clean up a mess that was created by three littles. Just be mindful of that in your approach.

I can imagine you've tolerated it. If you're anything like me, I like my house *Architectural Digest* ready at any moment. Someone, my subconscious thinks, is going to ring my doorbell one day and beg me to take pictures of my home. So any mess at all is very triggering to me. So if I had three children and I had a playroom that was just starting to feel out of control, that would be triggering.

So step one is to get yourself a little regulated before you open your mouth, right. Because a dysregulated parent with a dysregulated child is going to meet a storm every time. So maybe we're going to start out...One thing you could put into place is—and I'm making this up. You could modify it to work with you guys. Maybe every day at 3:00 part of our homeschooling is we clean up the playroom together. Over the years as the two little boys get older, they'll be able to help.

Now the other thing is you can actually make cleaning up the playroom fun. You could make it part of playing. You could make up the cleanup game. You could look on Pinterest. There are some fun games out there that parents have invented. Again, you could even work this in your homeschool curriculum. Charles, go pick up 10 red Lego pieces in a minute, and you set a timer.

We can sing while we're picking up. We'll have music on almost like musical chairs. While the music is on, you run around and pick up as many Lego pieces as you can and then randomly you stop the music. Now this is

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going to take a little effort and a little bit more time than just commanding someone to clean something up.

So much like the hamburger stand manager. If I'm running a hamburger stand and I have a bunch of teenagers working for me, if I make—even though they're cleaning toilets and taking out the garbage and frying French fries. If I make that culture fun, I'm going to make a lot more cooperation. Whether that's I have music in the background or we're all joking around or I'm asking nicely or I'm making sure everybody takes their turn cleaning the toilet every two hours, the bathroom. We're having some fun with it. The work hours go faster. I get more cooperation.

It's the same thing Lyra for your boys. Especially your oldest who, again, is being leaned on for more just by virtue of his age. So the other thing I want you to consider is making the cleanup fun in whatever form that looks like for you, for your family, and for your six year old's personality.

Then the other thing I want to talk about is let's say you ask him, "Can you clean up the playroom?" And he says no. Or you say, "Charles, it's time to clean up the playroom." And he says no. What I want you to do is get curious. Really? Well, why not? Again we're going to have some fun with this, and we're also going to dig down to his feelings and needs. Why not? Sometimes you'll be surprised at the answer you'll get even from a six year old. "I'm tired. I don't know how. I don't want to do it myself."

It's going to give you a piece of information that you can then connect with him over my bringing him into the conversation rather than being demanding, right. Rather than commanding him to pick up the toys. You can converse with him about getting the job done. Maybe he needs a snack. Maybe he needs to go to the bathroom. Maybe you need to run around the house for five minutes. I don't know what the reason is, but I would love for you to get in the habit of saying why not?

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Every single time my kid gives me a no, I have trained myself as the first response 100% of the time is to get curious and ask why not. About 70% of the time, I get an answer back that makes total sense to me. I may not like it, but it makes sense to me. From there we can dialogue about getting the job done.

Then finally I also want to encourage you to resist the urge to go to threats when he isn't cooperating. Because when you threaten to take things away in the heat of the moment, you're being punitive. Humans do not react well to being punitive. I've never met someone when you're punitive they go, "Oh, okay. I didn't know you were serious. Let me pick up the Legos now."

When you're punitive with a strong willed child, you're engaging in the highest form of power struggle. So now all of a sudden you want him to pick up the Legos. He says no. You tell him he better or we're going to pack the Legos away. Now all of a sudden, those Legos are everything to him because he feels as he's being forced to submit to your will.

The number one thing strong willed kids are not going to do is submit to someone else's will. They're going to dig their heels in, sometimes even about things that aren't even really that important. So resist the urge to go to punitiveness. It does not work with strong willed kids. So we can brainstorm on some things you can do, but I want to pause there and get your thoughts on that.

Lyra: Yes. It's so funny. I don't know if it's funny. Well it is funny. Let's have levity about it. It's like the Legos example, taking them away. It suddenly becomes so important. Like he is ready to just...He is dead set that he's going to get those Legos, even if he didn't care about the Legos five seconds ago.

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Or it will be a stick that he finds outside. I'll be like, "No, I don't want the stick in the house. It's going to hit somebody or you or scratch something. We need to put it outside." If he says no, I might go to—in my not as good peaceful parenting self—go to, "Well, I'm going to take the stick and I'm going to throw it outside." Then the stick is so important. I've just destroyed his world by taking this stick. I do find myself being like what's the big deal. Why are you freaking out about a stick? It's just a stick? So yes.

Lisa: But I can't help but point out you've also angered down into the Legos and the sticks as well. So you're both picking a side. You're both picking up the rope. Now we're going to tug of war over the rope, right? We're going to power struggle over the rope. Now listen. If you don't want to have sticks in the house, you might want to put a limit in place, which is we don't ever bring sticks in the house. Then that's easier for him to understand. Sticks stay outside. They don't come in the house.

That is a limit that you could set for the whole family 24/7. Then when he goes to bring the stick in, we're not power struggling over it. It's like, "Charles, remember. We don't bring sticks in the house. Where could you put this so that tonight when we come outside to water the plants, your stick will be exactly where you want it to be, and you can play with it again." Of course I'm making this up and it may not work exactly, but you get the gist. Or "Do you want to leave the stick out here and come inside or do you want to stay outside and play for five minutes and then come inside?"

See how we're giving him choices? We're giving him some agency over his life. He's going to feel a little bit more in control rather than power struggling with you over the stick. Because in his mind, you're throwing the gauntlet down with being punitive.

Lyra: Yes. I do see that in myself that I'm engaging in that power struggle with him. As I become more aware about it on this peaceful parenting

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journey, starting to know better and do better. There are times when I do get engaged with him, I don't know how to get myself out of it. I get stuck in it. Once you find yourself falling in the pit and you're holding the rope, how do you put the rope down with them? Because then you're dysregulated, they're dysregulated. Everybody's storming. How do we get out of this together?

Lisa: Yeah. It's a great question. I think it's noticing. You're on the journey. You're doing an amazing job. It's noticing the dysregulation within yourself. Where it shows up in your body, how it feels. When that sensation comes over you, it's taking a moment to ask yourself something like... This is what I ask myself because it's a good visual for me.

When Malcolm was little, we spent a lot of hours watching Thomas the Train. So I'm a big fan of Thomas the Train. Back when Malcolm was little it was Dora, Bob the Builder, and Thomas the Train. The whole goal of the conductor was to get all of those trains, Thomas and Captain. Oh I can't remember all the characters, but there were many characters. Thomas and his colleagues, the goal was to get all the trains running on time. Sir Topham Hatt, that was his name. Thomas and Sir Topham Hatt and the other trains, the goal was to get them running on time. That's all that mattered.

So sometimes when I'm dysregulated, I ask myself, even now, right. I have a 17 year old that's fairly independent, can drive himself, runs his own schedule. Even now I'll find myself getting dysregulated because I'm trying to get all the trains to run on time. I want everything to fit into its neat box. I want to check off as many boxes. I want everything to follow the game plan I have in my mind.

So I think you want to ask yourself something the equivalent of am I trying to be a train conductor? If I am, can I just slow down a little bit? Can I make

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it fun? Can I connect with him? Can I care more about the relationship over the behavior? If he's not picking up the Legos, can we all just take a deep breath for a minute and pause.

Maybe you have a game of like freeze, and everybody freezes for a couple seconds and does five deep breathing exercises. Then you ask again. "Hey, what would make this fun for us to clean this playroom up together?" You're doing it from the knowledge that although three boys messed it up, I am asking one boy to clean it up. I'm going to ask him in the kindest way I possibly can and make it fun for him and resist the urge to be punitive if it isn't getting done exactly the way I want it to exactly when I want it to because he's six.

Lyra: Right. He's six. Again, I think we forget that sometimes. Part of it is he's our first. He's our oldest. We don't really know what to expect a little bit sometimes I think. It's like the younger ones will get the advantage. Even now with James at three, we've already been through three with Charles. So I'm like, "Oh, that's just three. He'll grow out of it. That's just what they do. It's fine." But we don't know with Charles what's reasonable to expect from a six year old. Apply that to any age, and that their brain is still developing.

One question I have on that too is giving incentives or rewards. Sometimes I have the urge or the idea if I'm trying to get them to do something to use the carrot approach instead of the stick. Of like you can get a piece of dried mango, one of their favorite things. Some sort of sweet treat after you finish cleaning up the playroom, for example. Because that's what they value. They're a little young to pay them.

Then we worry about, we want them to have our family values that we all help each other, and we all contribute. So I don't want them to just do something because they expect to get a reward. I'm afraid I'm reinforcing

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that behavior versus teaching them the value. So I don't know what your thoughts are on that. Again, he's six and James is three. You know.

Lisa: Yeah. I love that question. I love that question. As I'm easing into the answer, let me say that you mentioned a minute ago that because Charles is your oldest, you don't know what to expect. I just have to say to everyone listening that's the value of being in community with likeminded parents in something like The Hive. Because you do have a place to go to get grounded, to help regulate, to remind you to drop the rope.

I just can't resist encouraging everybody to find their community. I would love to welcome you into The Hive. We're your community. If it's not that, then find a place to be in community so that you can know am I expecting too much or too little, right? I think that's one of the greatest values of being a Hive member.

So it's interesting, the question you ask about the reward. I think it's all in how you approach it. I mean let's be honest. Most of us adults are doing something for a reward. It's money, gratification, sense of accomplishment, we're doing things for people we love. I mean there's some carrot at the end. We lose weight and our health improves. People notice. We think we look better. We learn to play tennis. We get to go out and win matches and be with likeminded people and get exercise. We listen to music, and it evokes a certain feel good chemical in our brain. We feel heard and part of a community.

So I think this is part of the natural order, getting a payoff for doing something. Now I think you can take two different approaches. There could be an energy and an attitude of if you don't clean up all the toys, you're not going to get your mango. I was going to offer you a mango, but if you don't clean up the toys, I'm not going to give you a dried mango. I love dried mangos too. So I'll come over and clean up your toys.

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So there's that, and then there's the opposite which is more like a very neutral energy. No needy or graspingness. No threats, no punitiveness, and more like, "Hey Charles. Guess what. Here's the great news. When we get this room cleaned up, we get to go and have some dried mangoes together." Completely different, right?

Lyra: Yeah. And it's a connection that way too.

Lisa: Yes. I'd let you know when it's going to happen. When the room is cleaned up. But I don't have to threaten you. I don't have to make you feel like a horrible person. I don't have to put all this pressure. I don't have to dangle it and take it away and use it in a negative... It's like, "Buddy, the great news is when we get all this work done, we get paid with a dried mango." Isn't that how the real world works?

Lyra: Right. That makes sense.

Lisa: Yeah. I do a great job. I get paid. I do a great job. I get a bonus. I do a great job. I get a promotion. I don't do a great job. I don't get those things.

Lyra: Yeah, I like that. Again, it's making it more fun.

Lisa: Yes, and less punitive. So I guess in summary I want to say some things that we talked about today. This was great. I'm so grateful, Lyra, for you being here because I know how much it helps people to hear a coaching conversation. We talked about leaning on your six year old. The reality is you will lean on your oldest child but lean on them with fun and choices rather than work and demands.

We talked about making, and I'm saying this to all the parents out there. I don't care what age your kid is. I have a 17 year old. Believe it or not, I do my best every night to make getting off the gaming F-U-N. I joke with him.

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We laugh about it. I try to make it fun. I ask him some questions. I really try to make things fun as much as possible. So that's another tool for you is to make it fun.

Then really being aware of moving away from the urge to make things punitive, right. For a lot of us, that's how we grew up. We grew up in punitive households. That's kind of our auto response to stressful situations.

We have to fight that urge to move towards connection and cooperation. Questioning why don't you want to help me clean up? Having a do over, freezing for a moment and gathering yourself, moving away from making interacting with our kids punitive. Then lastly, offering the next step. I don't even want to use the word reward. Offering the payoff, again F-U-N, offering the payoff when the job gets done.

Lyra: Yeah. I will take these. I think this could really shift this gridlock that we have been stuck in. I mean all of these reinforce I think the main point you made in the beginning too. It's like needing that connection, needing that one on one special time, which is hard with multiple children. Or even if you have one child in the modern schedule that we all keep. How many hours in the day, how many minutes of quality time do you really get with that child? So I think that helps too.

When I am off of work... Usually when we're doing those types of activities, cleaning and homeschool and all of that is when I'm not working. So I've been gone working for X hours and days in a row and then all of a sudden I'm back. He's probably not wanting to just jump into getting the house picked back up.

Lisa: Yeah, I love that. Okay. So I'm going to give you a homework assignment if I may.

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Lyra: Please do.

Lisa: We're going to follow up with you down the road and see how it's going. So imagine this. Imagine when you come home from work and you're ready to clean up the playroom and pick up all the Legos. Imagine using that as your one on one time with Charles, making it totally fun for both of you.

So music in the background. Maybe you're both in comfy clothes. You're down on your knees on the floor helping him pick the Legos up. You guys are talking or joking around. Imagine making that your special time with Charles that's fun and still productive by getting the playroom cleaned up.

The duality, right? I'm really into this lately, duality. Imagine the duality of—oh, this is so good—imagine the duality of getting things done like cleaning up the playroom while engaging with him in special time while you're really connecting and making it fun.

Because as he ages and gets older and turns into a teenager, college student, and adult, I love the idea of you and Charles connecting over the simple things. Of it not having to be some special thing where you get in the car or drive to a restaurant or you do something super duper special, but we connect over the simple things day to day by making them fun and being fully present with each other.

Lyra: I love that. It's like finding beauty and connection in the mundane. Making the mundane beautiful. Making the things that normally we find mundane or uninspiring a place of coming together.

Lisa: Yeah. Also imagine not having to wait until the Legos are cleaned up and the playroom is perfect and that this is done and that is done to then carve out special time to leave the house and connect. The connection is in

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the mundane, and it's available to me as the mom every day to connect with that boy. Everyday it's sitting right there. Because all I need to do is connect, make it F-U-N, avoid the power struggle, drop the rope, and stay away from punitive statements. I'm connecting with him.

Lyra: Yeah.

Lisa: Mm, that is really good.

Lyra: I know. I love this. It totally just flips 180 for me because I have had that in my mind. I've even heard myself say this. Once we can get this all cleaned up, then we can sit down and have our special time together.

Lisa: Yes.

Lyra: It's like no. This is the special time right now.

Lisa: Yeah. Because you know what? This is so fascinating to me. As adults with a fully developed prefrontal cortex, a fully developed executive function, we often say...You get up on a Saturday. You say, "I'm going to clean my house stem to stern, and my payoff is going to be I go get to get a manicure." We have executive function. So we can see seven steps ahead. When I clean the house, I'm going to enjoy a clean house. Then afterwards, my nails are going to look great, right. We can see that.

A six year old little boy can't hear and understand, "We've got to get the playroom cleaned up and then we can do something." So then while you're cleaning up the playroom, there's all this power struggle which leads to punitive threats which then leads to a meltdown which then leads to, "The heck with it. We're not going to have the special time. This just took us two hours, and it was a complete shit show the whole time. Now I don't feel like

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having any special time with you. I'm so dysregulated. Forget it. We'll just have to try again later."

Lyra: Everyone's exhausted.

Lisa: Yeah. He's feeling equally the same. When the magic is well let's use the cleanup time as F-U-N to connect as our special time and have a good time.

Lyra: Yeah. I mean you can insert anything into that. It doesn't have to be clean the playroom. Any task, any chore, anything that you need to do. You're doing it together.

Lisa: Yeah. Sometimes I'll help my 17 year old put all his laundry away. I'll help him carry it into his room and I'll sit down on his bed while he's putting it away. I'm chatting away with him. Then he has this beanbag chair in his room, and sometimes he'll plop down on the beanbag, and we'll keep the conversation going for a good five minutes. I don't want to lead anybody to believe we're in there for two hours chatting away, but sometimes that connection for us, it's five minutes while he's putting his laundry away. Sometimes that's like the best five minutes of my day.

Lyra: I love that. One of the things I just wanted to say is that I so value the work that you do because often I think with the strong willed child personality type, if we don't know better we tend to squash intentionally or not intentionally or try to squash that spirit in them.

You teach us or show us that it's something to be cherished. That it can be cultivated and expressed in a beautiful way where we can have connection with that child and prepare them to be amazing human beings. I think if we didn't have those skills, if we didn't have that understanding, if we didn't

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have the peaceful parenting toolkit, it's so easy to just see oh this is a problem child. Or try to squash that in them.

So I just so value. I just wanted to say that because it's something I've been reflecting on a lot. I tell my husband this. I'm like, "You know, it might be a little challenging to parent, but it's going to make a great adult. Someone that is so strong in who they are and can just hold in his values and what he knows is right because we've taught him to value that himself. What a gift to humanity."

Lisa: I agree. If you need to feed him, feel free to. I mean it's.

Lyra: So I just wanted to tell you that and the world. Going through The Hive has been so impactful because you listen to the podcast. It's a great reinforcement. It's a great beginning. Being able to talk through and share with each other and have connection with other parents that are on the same peaceful parenting journey makes it real.

Lisa: Thank you.

Lyra: So thank you.

Lisa: Yeah, thank you. Okay. I thank you for being here and sharing with us and going on this journey. I can't wait to hear how this turns out. I feel like you've got some amazing tools to forge ahead for your mindset, for your approach, and for your interaction with Charles. I can't wait to hear how it goes for you guys.

Lyra: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Lisa.

Lisa: You are so welcome. Yeah, you're welcome. Okay everybody, I hope you enjoyed that as much as I did. I hope you were able to find some tools

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in that conversation, in that coaching call that you can apply to your family to create your transformation within you. So thank you so much for being here today. Until we meet again, I'm wishing you peaceful parenting. Take care.

Thank you so much for listening today. I want to personally invite you to head over to thepeacefulparent.com/welcome and sign up for my free peaceful parenting minicourse. You'll find everything you need to get started on the path to peaceful parenting just waiting for you over there at www.thepeacefulparent.com/welcome. I can't wait for you to get started.

Thanks for listening to *Real World Peaceful Parenting*. If you want more info on how you can transform your parenting, visit thepeacefulparent.com. See you soon.